

16

SPEED LIMIT REVISIONS REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, April 20, 2005, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The existing speed limit of 80-km per hour on York-Durham Line (Y.R. 30) from 200 metres south of the south limit of Main Street to 740 metres south of the south limit of Main Street, in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville be reduced to 60-km per hour.
2. The existing speed limit of 60-km per hour on Aurora Road (Y.R. 15) from 600 metres east of the east limit of Highway 48 and 1,425 metres east of the east limit of Highway 48, in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville be reduced to 50 km-per hour on Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., on school days only, with the reduced school zone speed limit controlled by flashing beacons.
3. The existing speed limit of 60-km per hour on McCowan Road (Y.R. 67) be reduced from 824 metres north of the north limit of Bethesda Road and 427 metres south of the south limit of Bloomington Road (Y.R. 40) to 50-km per hour in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.
4. The existing speed limit of 70-km per hour on Rutherford Road (Y.R. 73) from 375 metres east of the east limit of Barrhill Road/Westbourne Road to 200 metres west of Creditstone Road/Melville Road, in the City of Vaughan be reduced to 60-km per hour.
5. The Regional Solicitor be directed to prepare the necessary by-laws.
6. The Regional Clerk forward a copy of this report to the Clerks of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and the City of Vaughan, and to the Chief of York Regional Police with a request to enforce these new regulations, as their resources permit.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council authorization to change existing speed limit regulations for certain sections of roads within the Regional road system.

In accordance with the *Highway Traffic Act*, a Regional by-law is required in addition to the posting of appropriate speed limit signs before any of the proposed changes can be enforced.

3. BACKGROUND

Regional Council at its meeting on September 23, 2004 adopted a new policy on setting speed limits on the Regional road system. This policy is based on a number of factors including completion of field studies to determine operating speed; analysis of collision history to identify any relevant patterns or trends; assessment of physical roadway characteristics; and evaluation of any existing or proposed adjacent land use.

The Roads Transportation Branch regularly reviews posted speed limits on Regional Roads. Revisions to the existing speed limits take into account a number of factors to ensure that the regulatory speed is applicable to the existing roadway characteristics and roadside environment, and is in accordance with actual operating speeds and collision history. Where instances occur that reconstruction changes the roadside environment and alignment to such a degree that existing speed limits are no longer appropriate, steps are to be taken to ensure that the regulatory speed limit is appropriate with the new roadway characteristics.

These reviews are initiated by concerns from residents, requests from local municipalities and general development growth adjacent to Regional roads.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Speed limit reviews were carried out to address requests for speed limit reductions on a number of roadways throughout the Region. A goal of these reviews is to standardize the regulatory speed limit applications for each section of road in accordance with the current roadway characteristics, actual operating speed, and collision history. The speed limit review process of each of the road sections consists of:

- A classification of the roads characteristics.
- Speed studies to determine the operating speeds.
- A summary of the recent collision history.
- Identification of any potential safety issues.

The results of the road characteristics, the speed study, collision history if applicable and potential safety issues for each of the proposed speed regulation changes are discussed below.

4.1 York-Durham Line, South of Main Street, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

York-Durham Line south of Main Street is a two-lane semi-urban roadway that carries approximately 5,900 vehicles per day. Approximately 200 metres south of Main Street in Stouffville on York-Durham Line the 60-km per hour speed limit changes to 80-km per hour. Within 540 m after the start of the 80-km per hour speed limit, to the south, there are two unsignalized intersections: Loretta Crescent to the west and the Uxbridge Pickering Line to the east. Loretta Crescent provides access to a residential development, while Uxbridge Pickering Line is a local rural road in the Region of Durham. In addition to these intersections, there are three driveways to residential properties adjacent to the York-Durham Line.

The nature of the road environment and land use on York-Durham Lane between Main Street and the Uxbridge Pickering Line (about 740 m south of Main Road) are fairly uniform and is it therefore desirable that the speed limit over this section of York-Durham Line should also be uniform (*see Attachment1*).

In order to improve the safety of traffic using Loretta Crescent and the Uxbridge Pickering Line, and to enhance the uniformity of speed limits on the York-Durham Line, it is recommended that the existing 80-km per hour speed limit be reduced to 60 km-per hour from 200 metres south of the south limit of Main Street to 740 metres south of the south limit of Main Street.

4.2 Aurora Road at Ballantrae Public School

Aurora Road through Ballantrae is a two-lane semi-urban roadway that carries approximately 4,990 vehicles per day. The Ballantrae Public School is located east of Highway 48 on the north side of Aurora Road.

A field study conducted on March 24, 2005 revealed that there were no pedestrians or school children walking to the school. Busses dropping children off enter the school site via an existing bus loop. The study also revealed that there is a significantly high amount of parents dropping their children off in front of the school. The school entrance and a community centre with a daycare facility are located to the west of the school and is situated closer to the roadway than most schools within the Region.

It is, therefore, recommended that the existing posted speed limit on Aurora Road be decreased in the area of the school to provide a uniform and safe speed in this area. (*see Attachment 2*). During school days, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., a 50-km per hour speed zone, controlled by flashing beacons, is proposed to be implemented between 600 metres east of the east limit of Highway 48 and 1,425 metres east of the east limit of Highway 48. It is anticipated that the revisions to the posted speed limit will provide improved safety throughout the school zone.

4.3 McCowan Road, Bloomington Road to Bethesda Road

McCowan Road through the hamlet of Lemonville is a two-lane semi-urban roadway that carries approximately 2,820 vehicles per day. This section of McCowan Road has numerous residential accesses on both sides of the road and narrow shoulders throughout the section.

In order to determine the appropriate speed limit, Regional staff applied the speed limit policy, adopted by Council on September 23, 2004, for the section of McCowan Road, from 824 metres north of the north limit of Bethesda Road and 427 metres south of the south limit of Bloomington Road. The results indicate that conditions in this area reflect and are consistent with a 50-km per hour speed limit.

Therefore, it is recommended that the existing posted speed limit of 60-km per hour on McCowan Road be reduced to 50-km per hour from 824 metres north of the north limit of Bethesda Road to 427 metres south of the south limit of Bloomington Road (*see Attachment 3*). It is anticipated that the reduction in the posted speed limit will assist in improving the overall safety along this section of McCowan Road.

4.4 Rutherford Road, East of Keele Street, City of Vaughan

Rutherford Road east of Keele Street is a four-lane urban roadway that carries approximately 34,600 vehicles per day.

Located approximately 825 metres east of Keele Street on Rutherford Road is a Canadian National Railway (CNR) Crossing and a GO Transit Facility. The existing posted speed limit on Rutherford Road east of Keele Street is 60-km per hour transitioning to 70-km per hour.

GO Transit has submitted a Grade Crossing Safety Assessment conducted by UMA Engineering Ltd. The assessment has identified the need to have the posted speed limit reduced to 60-km per hour prior to the crossing and the GO Transit facility to provide lower travelling speeds.

In order to improve the safety of traffic crossing the CNR crossing and vehicles entering and exiting the GO Transit facility, it is recommended that the existing 60-km per hour speed limit be extended 175 m east (*see Attachment 4*).

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs associated with the manufacture and installation of the new speed limit signs are included within the 2005 Roads Transportation Budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The recommended revisions to the speed limits relate to the Regional road system with no direct impact on the local municipality. The revisions reflect the changes stemming from both existing and proposed adjacent development and local concerns for speeding and safety. The changes to the posted speed limits are intended to improve the level of speed compliance in areas where safety is an issue.

7. CONCLUSION

The Roads Transportation Branch initiated a review of the existing speed limit regulations as part of a regular speed limit review process. The proposed speed limit changes will assist in standardizing the regulatory speed limit applications for each section of road, in accordance with the current roadway characteristics, speeds, and collision history.

A by-law is required before speed limits can be enforced. Therefore, the Regional Solicitor should prepare the necessary by-laws and a copy of this report should be forwarded to the Chief of Police, with a request to enforce these new regulations, as their resources permit.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachments referred to in this clause were included in the agenda for the May 4, 2005 Committee meeting.)